

# 6. Children need caring and nurturing relationships with adults.

## Advocacy Strategies

\*potential for DEY mini-grant funding

### 1. Advocate for Low Adult-to-Child Ratios

- **Strategy:** Push for policies and funding that support smaller group sizes and lower ratios so adults can build meaningful connections with each child.
- **Suggestions:** Support legislation or funding proposals that prioritize quality early childhood care. \*Educate families and stakeholders on how low ratios enhance emotional support and learning outcomes.

### 2. Promote Relationship-Based Practices

- **Strategy:** Encourage programs to center care around strong, consistent adult-child relationships as a core component of early learning.
- **Suggestions:** Advocate for continuity of care models, where the same caregiver is assigned over time. Encourage schools to incorporate relationship-building goals into their curricula and teacher evaluations.

### 3. Provide Training in Responsive Caregiving

- **Strategy:** Call for ongoing professional development that equips educators to build nurturing, respectful, and culturally responsive relationships.
- **Suggestions:** \*Request or lead training on attachment, trauma-informed care, and social-emotional development. \*Share resources and invite experts to speak on child-centered, emotionally supportive practices.

### 4. Encourage Family Engagement and Partnership

- **Strategy:** Promote strong partnerships between educators and families to support the child's emotional world, both at home and in care settings.
- **Suggestions:** Host family-teacher conferences that go beyond academics to focus on relationship-building. Create consistent, two-way communication about each child's emotional and developmental needs.

### 5. Speak Up for the Value of Care

- **Strategy:** Publicly affirm that emotional connection and caregiving are not "extras" but essential to early development.
- **Suggestions:** \*Share real stories or data showing how strong adult-child bonds lead to better outcomes. Push back against rigid academic-only approaches that overlook the importance of relationships in the learning process.